

SRCAF NOTES ~ OCTOBER, 2003

The Sacramento River Conservation Area Board Members:

Don Anderson ~ Chair, Glenn County
Lynnel Pollock ~ Vice Chair, Yolo County
Brendon Flynn ~ Sec./Treas., Tehama County

Bill Borrer, Tehama County

Denny Bungarz, Glenn County

Ben Carter, Colusa County

Mel Dodgin, The Resources Agency

Jane Dolan, Butte County

Marc Faye, Yolo County

Dan Gover, Shasta County

Glenn Hawes, Shasta County

Shirley Lewis, Butte County

Dan Silva, Sutter County

David Womble, Colusa County

Russell Young, Sutter County

Ex-Officio Members:

Frank Michny, Bureau of Reclamation

Darrin Thome, U.S. F&WS

Mark Charlton, Corps of Engineers

Diana Jacobs, Department of Fish & Game

Pete Rabbon, The Reclamation Board

Dwight Russell, Department of Water Resources

Burt Bundy, Manager
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Future SRCAF Board and Committee Meetings ~

TAC Meeting - Nov 4, 9:30 am,
Department of Water Resources,
Red Bluff

LAC meeting - Nov 12, 2:00 pm,
Colusa County Farm Bureau Office

SRCAF Board meeting - Dec 4, 3:00
Monday Afternoon Club, Willows

Hamilton City—A New way of Doing Business...

A comment by Burt Bundy, SRCAF Manager

The combined flood protection and ecosystem restoration project at Hamilton City took a couple of big steps forward these past few months. While there are several large hurdles yet to go over, these steps have taken the project to protect Hamilton City from the almost yearly exercise of sandbagging the deteriorating "J" levee much further than efforts have ever taken it before. In previous studies, requirements that a "cost/benefit" ratio of a single focus flood control project show that the cost of the project provide enough public benefit to justify the cost have not been met. However, by adding ecosystem restoration as part of the dual direction, the public benefit ratio has been increased to the point of feasibility.

The first significant step reached recently was one that has as much to do with the new Army Corps of Engineer's approach as anything. This Feasibility Study has been one where the locals have truly been part of the development of the levee location alternative. Glenn County, the Hamilton City Community Services District, and area landowners have all been involved in the discussions, and most of all, the decisions. This approach has been the result of both the attitude of the agency staff and the insistence and willingness of the locals to be part of the process. When the time came for the selection of the "federally selected plan", the Hamilton City CSD led the way for unanimous support for one of the six alternatives. This unanimity came because of their involvement in the process. At a recent Region "F-4" Corps conference to review the technical merits of the draft selected alternative, the locals participated. The approach by the Corps to include the locals in the process from the start has been key to the progress so far.

As a second step in the process and a direct result of the F-4 conference, the Corps is moving forward by requesting authorization for pre-construction engineering and design for inclusion in the 2004 COE funding request. This step will require the commitment of a state cost-share (25%), and the determination of a non-federal sponsor. This will be interesting in that the State Reclamation Board (usually the non-federal sponsor for Corps flood control projects) is not normally a sponsor of the ecosystem restoration portion of a project. The commitment by CALFED early on in this process to provide funding for lands, easement, and right-of-ways for this project and the state cost-share has been essential to its success.

The Sacramento River Conservation Area Forum has played a part as a facilitator of workshops and has helped coordinate discussions with different players in the area, but the success so far can be credited to everyone involved in the process. Glenn County has stepped up to build a back-up levee for the threat at the upper end of the "J" levee and to commit to development of a long-term maintenance program. The HC Community Services District, through the leadership of Jose Puente, has provided direction for local needs. Discussion of planning a recreation component for the project or developing educational facilities nearby has also occurred. The Nature Conservancy (TNC), an unusual partner for a flood control project, has stepped forward to facilitate acquisition and maintenance of properties until levee location is finalized. TNC will also restore habitat on the land needed for the project and return the balance to agriculture. Local landowners on both sides of the River have expressed their positions and concerns while also providing needed local verification of geographic features and historic flood levels. Participation by all the interests has been essential to the planning process. The progress to date has been significant, but the big steps are yet to come: Our local elected representatives must step forward to secure federal funding for design and construction; State agencies have to determine the non-federal sponsor for the ecosystem side of the project, and; the locals have to establish a maintenance entity and funding structure for the new levee. Progress on each of these challenges is being made and with the cooperation and dedication shown by everyone involved, I believe a new way of doing business along the Sacramento River will evolve.

Remember to attend the **Hamilton City Levee Festival on October 19**....Good food and more information about a great project.



Woodson Bridge ~ At a recent Project Team meeting on the Corps of Engineers Ecosystem Restoration Project for the Woodson Bridge/Kopta Slough area, Tom Smith from Ayres Associates reported that the baseline hydraulics studies were about 75% complete and the geomorphic assessment was almost finished. A key product of this information will be projected future river movement and flood water location; the environmental review will address project impacts, both adverse and beneficial, to fish, wildlife and the local community. A public workshop is set for November 12th, an announcement to local newspapers and a letter to area residents will be sent out as soon as a location is confirmed.

At The Tac ~ Kelly Moroney, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service reported on the draft Comprehensive Conservation Plan for the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Refuge which is currently being reviewed and will be out for public comment in November. Several ongoing projects were updated at the September and October meetings including : The Shahi Property located inside the levee in Glenn

County , the La Barranta Unit of the Sacramento River National Wildlife Refuge, currently in the environmental compliance phase, the CALFED Riparian Sanctuary Study, and two new projects: Acquisition of a flood-prone portion of 83 acres inside the levee at River Mile 166, and the Tisdale Boat Launching Facility in Sutter County.

At The Board ~ A new slate of officers was elected at the September 18th Board meeting: Chair ~ Don Anderson, Glenn County landowner representative Vice Chair ~ Lynnel Pollock, Yolo County public interest representative and Secretary/Treasurer ~ Brendon Flynn, Tehama County landowner representative. A special thanks to outgoing Chair, Jane Dolan, for her leadership this past year.

A board committee was established to look at the ongoing problems several counties have experienced when trying to obtain permits to dredge their boat ramps. Denny Bungarz, Glenn County, will chair the committee.

Representatives from the Department of Water Resources and the Bureau of Reclamation gave a presentation on the status of the North-of-the-Delta Off-stream Storage investigation. The investigation has focused on four potential projects including Sites Reservoir. The SRCAF is continuing to discuss a variety of critical issues in its efforts to develop a strategic plan. Part of the process has included input from key stakeholders through focus group meetings and interviews giving them the opportunity to participate in the definition, and possible resolution, of the issues.

SALMON COUNTRY CONFERENCE ~ **October 24**, , Red Bluff Community Center, 1500 South Jackson Street, Red Bluff, Ca. The conference will feature presentations on Cottonwood and Battle Creeks as well as information on the restoration activities occurring between Anderson in Shasta County and Red Bluff in Tehama County. The cost is \$20 including a continental breakfast and lunch. A post-conference tour will take place on Saturday from 10 am to 2 pm at a cost of \$10/person. The Bureau of Land Management is offering tours of lands under its protection in a unit known as an Area of Critical Environmental Concern. For more information, contact the Sacramento River Preservation Trust at (530) 345-1865.
